

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-26 are pending. Claims 1 and 13 are amended, and claims 21-26 are added. Claims 1, 13, 21, and 24 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Claim for Priority

The Examiner has acknowledged the Applicant's claim for foreign priority.

Information Disclosure Citation

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the references supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed April 20, 2004, and for providing the Applicant with an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 form filed therewith.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 12, 13, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Bettin et al. (U.S. 6,533,339);

claims 1, 2, 12, 13, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kohyama et al. (U.S. 4,441,574);

claims 3, 4, 7, 15, 16, and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bettin et al.;

claims 3-6 and 15-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kohyama et al.; and

claims 8-11 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kohyama et al. in view of Lemmen (U.S. 6,062,623).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Amendments to Independent Claims 1 and 13

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 1 is amended herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a structure of a storage system, including *inter alia*

a storage indent indented downwardly from an opening and provided on an inclined plane portion of a fender that covers a wheel; and

a lid that opens and closes the opening of the storage indent and is swingably provided on the inclined plane portion of the fender.

In addition, and in a similar manner, independent claim 13 is amended to recite a combination of elements directed to a structure of a storage system, including *inter alia*

a storage container that is inclined to conform to contours of a fender for covering a wheel;

an indent indented downwardly from an opening in the fender, said indent being configured to receive the storage container and to conform to the inclined shape of the storage container and being received within the fender for covering a wheel; and

a lid for opening and closing the opening, said lid being swingably mounted on the inclined plane portion of the fender.

Support for the novel features of claims 1 and 13 can be seen, for example, in FIGS. 3, 7, 8, 10, and 11.

By contrast, as can be seen in Bettin et al. FIGS. 1, 3, and 4, this document merely discloses doors 140, 340, and 440 in a storage fender 110, 130, 140, and is silent about an indent indented (extended) downwardly from an opening, as set forth in independent claims 1 and 13 of the present invention.

Further as can be seen in Kohyama et al., FIGS. 5 and 9, this document merely disclose indents 42, 52 indented horizontally, and is silent about an indent indented (extended) downwardly from an opening, as set forth in independent claims 1 and 13 of the present invention.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 13 are in condition for allowance.

Added Independent Claims 21 and 24

Independent claim 21 is added herein to recite a combination of elements directed to a structure of a storage system, including *inter alia*

a storage container that is indented downwardly; and

a lid that opens and closes an opening of the storage indent and is swingably provided on the inclined plane portion of the fender,

wherein the storage indent is provided on an inclined plane portion of one of fenders, the fenders being respectively provided for all wheels of the vehicle so as to respectively cover the wheels, and

wherein the lid opens in a longitudinal direction of the vehicle.

Further, independent claim 24 is added to recite a combination of elements directed to a structure of a storage system, including *inter alia*

a storage container that is inclined to conform to a contours of one of fenders respectively provided for all wheels of the vehicle so as to respectively cover the wheels;

an indent that is indented downwardly in the one of fenders, said indent being configured to receive the storage container and to conform to the inclined shape of the storage container and being received within the one of fenders; and

a lid for opening and closing an opening in the storage container, said lid being swingably mounted on the inclined plane portion of the one of fenders,

wherein the opening is directed in a longitudinal direction of the vehicle.

Support for the novel features set forth in independent claims 21 and 24 can be seen, for example, in FIGS. 3, 7, 8, 10, and 11.

By contrast, as can be seen in Bettin et al. FIGS. 1, 3, and 4, this document merely discloses fenders covering two of the four wheels and a storage fender 110, 310, 410. Further, Bettin et al. is silent about a storage container or an indent that is indented downwardly, as set forth in independent claims 21 and 24 of the present invention.

Further as can be seen in Kohyama et al., FIGS. 5 and 9, this document merely discloses lid 43, 53 that opens in a direction perpendicular to the traveling direction of the vehicle. Further, Kohyama et al. is silent about a storage container or an indent that is indented downwardly, and wherein the lid opens in a longitudinal direction (traveling direction) of the vehicle, as set forth in each of independent claims 21 and 24 of the present invention.

Therefore, independent claims 21 and 24 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner will note that dependent claims 22, 23, 25 and 26 are added to set forth additional novel features of the invention.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

Application No. 10/815,755
Amendment dated March 22, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 22, 2004

Docket No. 0649-1006PUS1
Art Unit: 3612
Page 14 of 14

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,
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